
Caritas Congo, "the people need peace". Alarming cholera outbreak among displaced people

"Peace, peace, peace. This is what we are asking for. The population needs peace", reiterates to SIR **Boniface Nakwagelewi ata-Deagbo**, executive secretary of Caritas Congo, underlining the word 'peace' several times, so that the message may be heard loud and clear by the rest of the world in these days of Pope Francis' visit to Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, where he will remain until February 3 before travelling to South Sudan where he will stay until February 5. The Caritas officer described the festive atmosphere in Kinshasa ahead of the Pope's arrival, 37 years after the visit of John Paul II, when the country was still called Zaire. No less than one million people are expected to attend the 9.30 a.m. Holy Mass at Ndolo airport today: even as many as "two or three million" according to the national Caritas executive secretary. Noting incredulity at this figure, he confirmed: "Catholics account for almost half of the overall population, there will surely be a large crowd." **"We are all set to welcome the Pope**, there is widespread excitement - he says -, photos and posters of him can be seen all over the city. We stopped working yesterday at noon. People are crowding the streets that he is expected to pass through, although many will be watching him on television." Pope Francis is scheduled to meet the victims of the conflict in eastern Congo at the apostolic nunciature in the afternoon, followed by a meeting with the representatives of various charities: "The victims include women, children, people with mutilations caused by the war, whose legs and arms have been cut off," he said. "Many have escaped to Kinshasa, after having been helped by Caritas Goma."